UNITED
NATIONS

Convention to Combat
Desertification

Distr.
GENERAL

ICCD/COP(1)/Inf.1
25 July 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
First Session
Rome, 29 September - 10 October 1997

ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE FIRST SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS

The first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (COP 1) will be held from 29 September to 10 October 1997 at Rome, Italy. The present document contains some general information that may be helpful for participants. The COP 1 will be convened and hosted by the Government of the Italian Republic in accordance with INCD decision 9/3; with Article 22, paragraph 4 of the Convention and General Assembly resolution 51/180 of 16 December 1996. It will be organized in two segments: an initial segment (29 September - 6 October 1997), and a high-level segment (7-10 October 1997).

1. Venue of the meeting

COP 1 will take place at the Headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) at:

Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00100 Rome, Italy
Telephone: (39.6) 5225.1 (expected to become 5705.1 in August)
Fax: (39.6) 5225.3152 (expected to become 5705.3152 in August)

The Conference will be opened on Monday, 29 September 1997 at 9:00 a.m. in the Plenary Hall. This room will be the venue for all plenary meetings. In addition to the Plenary Hall, other meeting rooms will be available for two concurrent meetings with interpretation during normal working hours. There will also be some facilities for informal meetings without interpretation. **Working hours will normally be from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and 14:00 p.m. to 17:00 p.m.**

2. Conference secretariat

The head of the Conference secretariat is Mr. Hama Arba Diallo, Executive Secretary, Interim Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

The secretariat can be reached at the following address:

Interim Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
Geneva Executive Centre
11/13 Chemin des Anémones
CH-1219 Châtelaine, Geneva, Switzerland
Telephone: (41.22) 979.94.20 / 979.94.04
Fax: (41.22) 979.90.30
E-mail: secretariat@unccd.ch

3. National Organizing Committee

The Italian Government has appointed Mr. Paolo Coppini and Mr. Paolo Massa, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as the national coordinators for the Conference. They can be contacted at the following address:

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Piazzale della Farnesina
1 Rome, Italy
P. Coppini
Telephone: (39.6) 3338.632
Fax: (39.6) 3691.3661
E:mail: paolo.coppini@ntt.it
P. Massa
Telephone: (39.6) 3691.5107
Fax: (39.6) 3691.5106

4. Hotel accommodation

Each delegation is requested to arrange its own hotel accommodation. The National Organizing Committee has made arrangements for the assistance of the Rome Hotel Owners' Association. If required, reservations for hotel rooms can be arranged by:

Sra. Lidia Mangioni
Associazione Provinciale Romana Albergatori (APRA)
(Rome Hotel Owners' Association)
Corso d'Italia 10
00198 Rome, Italy
Telephone: (39.6) 8414.908
Fax: (39.6) 8445.559
Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 13:00 p.m., Monday to Friday (office closed 11-15 August).

The Rome Hotel Owners' Association will inform participants of the conditions and procedures as necessary.

Please note that the Conference falls in a peak tourist season and in order to secure hotel accommodation through this channel, reservations must be made as soon as possible, and in any case no later than 20 August 1997. The Rome Hotel Owners' Association has pointed out that the hotels concerned require direct full payment in advance. Alternatively, confirmation can be effected by acceptable credit card.

5. FAO Coordination

The Director-General of FAO has appointed Mr. Hosny El-Lakany, Director, Forest Resources Division, as Coordinator of the Conference for FAO:

Hosny El-Lakany
Director, Forest Resources Division
FAO
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
00100 Rome, Italy
Telephone: (39.6) 5225.5879 (expected to become 5705.5875 in August)
Fax: (39.6) 5225.5137 (expected to become 5705.5137 in August)
E-mail: hosny.ellakany@fao.org

6. Accreditation

The credentials of representatives of Parties and the names of alternate representatives and advisers must be issued either by the Head of State or Government or by the Minister of Foreign Affairs. To ensure full participation in the work of the Conference, it is recommended that representatives of Parties be provided with full powers to participate in the session, and, if necessary, to serve as officers of COP 1 and any sessional committees or working groups, as well as officers of the subsidiary bodies established by the Convention.

Credentials must be submitted to the Interim Secretariat of the Convention. The Bureau of COP 1 will examine the credentials and report to the session.

Observer States, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations will also require to be accredited.

7. Immigration formalities

The Italian Government will ensure that immigration formalities are facilitated. Nevertheless, all participants at the Conference are requested to check whether they require a visa. Should a visa be required, applications may be submitted, with reference to the Conference, to the nearest Italian Embassy or Consulate.

8. Customs regulations

Information on customs regulations in Italy may be obtained from any Italian Embassy or Consulate.

9. Rome airport

Rome's international airport is the Leonardo da Vinci at Fiumicino. An information desk arranged by the National Organizing Committee will be operating in the arrivals lounge to assist delegates with information on accommodation and transportation.

10. Transport

Delegations are requested to organize their own transport from and to the airport and within Rome. Rome has a wide public transport network. FAO Headquarters is conveniently located in close proximity to the Circo Massimo metro station.

11. Registration

Identity badges will be issued at registration and participants are asked to wear their badge at all times as they will be allowed access to FAO only upon its presentation.

Registration will take place at FAO Headquarters. Details of the precise location of registration for national delegations, intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations and other observers, as well as for media and United Nations staff, Specialised Agencies and United Nations Programmes, will be made available closer to the start of the COP.

12. Speaker's list

A speaker's list for the high-level segment as well as for other plenary statements will be opened during the resumed part of the tenth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for Desertification meeting in Geneva to be held from 18-22 August 1997. Details will be published that week in the Daily Journal for the INCD.

13. Medical Services

The FAO headquarters has medical services. In addition, the National Organizing Committee will arrange for availability of emergency hospitalisation.

14. Public phone/facsimile

A public phone and fax office will be operating during the COP within FAO headquarters, for the convenience of delegates and other participants.

15. Additional services for participants at the FAO

FAO facilities for the Post Office, bank, newspaper stand, bar, cafeteria and restaurant services, book shop, photo shop and travel agency will be available to Conference participants. In addition, the Automobil Club Italia may provide a car hire desk.

16. Meeting and exhibition facilities

A limited amount of meeting facilities will be available for presentations, exhibits and informal meetings. Arrangements can be made through the Secretariat on a first-come-first-served basis.

17. Press centre

An international press centre will be provided for accredited journalists. For information on accreditation, please contact:

Ms. Nada Osseiran
Geneva Executive Centre
CP 356
CH-1219 Châtelaine, Geneva, Switzerland
Telephone: (41-22) 979.94.12
Fax: (41-22) 979.90.30/31
E-mail: nosseiran@unccd.ch
or
Mr. Michael Williams
Information Unit on Conventions (IUC)
Geneva Executive Centre
CP 356, CH-1219 Châtelaine, Geneva, Switzerland
Telephone: (41-22) 979.92.42
Fax: (41-22) 797.34.64
E-mail: michael.williams@unep.ch

18. Additional events

A special calendar of any additional parallel events which may be organized in Rome will be published. Also, delegates will be provided at registration with cultural and tourist information, including a plan of FAO Headquarters.

19. General information on Rome

Climate:	Still warm. Normally, summer clothing is still being worn.
Electricity:	220 Volt, 50 Hertz.
Local currency:	Italian Lira (On 3 July 1997 the BCI conversion rate was Lit.1,699 = US$1).
Local time:	GMT + 1